

## Always look on the bright side of life



Ernst

*Morrie was a columnist of a renowned teenage magazine and enjoyed great success with her weekly column about teen fashion. She received hundreds of emails every week from young boys and girls who were eager to learn about her thoughts*

*on the latest trends and styles. To meet their feverish demands, Morrie even started her own blog. For nearly a year, inspiration came to her whenever she sat in front of her computer. Yet as with all good things, this too, had to come to an end. Her editor-in-chief had decided to change the direction of the magazine, which prompted the need for Morrie to start a new column with a different topic. This decision shook Morrie's world like an earthquake. It was like having her cosy little cottage torn down by some violent disaster, leaving her completely exposed, entirely out of her comfort zone. It was evident that Morrie was suffering from writer's block.*

*She had tried it all – research, meditation, drinking coffee, a stroll in the park – but nothing worked. It had already been 10 days since she wrote something 'decent'. She was desperate. There were only 3 days left before the deadline. The very thought of writing no longer filled her with excitement and the only thing she found herself capable of writing was her letter of resignation. She was ready to give up.*

*The next morning, Morrie switched on the telly at breakfast as usual and was deeply struck by the image she saw – a close up of a frail young boy whose big smile bore a striking contrast*

*to his ill health. It was later revealed that this 15-year-old was diagnosed with a rare case of severe coronary disease which demanded an immediate heart transplant. This remarkable display of bravery left Morrie feeling disconcerted – had this boy any idea what was lying in wait? For it was not fear or desperation she saw in this boy but an extraordinary will to survive and experience the joy of life. The news occupied Morrie's mind but not for long. She soon had to get ready to meet her editor-in-chief for the last time.*

*On the way to the bus stop, Morrie got a call from her sister Ann who was in distress. Ann, a secondary school teacher, had just lost a student. The victim in question was a 16-year-old girl, an 'A' student. Her cause of death: suicide. The decision was most likely triggered by the recent dissatisfactory exam results. Ann was very upset and could not come to terms with the fact that her favourite student, the role model in class had made such a tragic decision. Morrie tried to console her sister, knowing that the kind hearted Ann would blame herself over the failure to pick up any signs of suicidal tendency. 'We don't know what we've got until it's gone,' Morrie comforted. 'And this girl will never know how much everybody loves her. I know you love her, Ann. It wasn't your fault. And you know that.'*

*Upon hanging up, Morrie was surprised by how much she was affected by her sister's news. She was angry with this young student for throwing away her life. She was even angrier still because this girl chose to give up in the face of such a small obstacle. But was she very different from this girl?*

*Morrie then recalled the frail, cheerful face of the dying young boy. 'Yes,' she said. 'That's the attitude. If he believes that death can be overcome, why can't I overcome my writer's block?' She knew what to do with her column – she would keep writing for a meaningful cause and share with her readers all the good things in life. For the first time in days, she felt relieved. She started whistling the song that always made her smile – 'Always Look on the Bright Side of Life.' Yes, she would write about her enlightenment, about how she was inspired by the brave young boy and she would name the article by the very song she was whistling.*